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Schwartz, Geraldine.

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Rapide compte rendu de la deuxième phase d'une expérience effectué en collaboration par le collège John Abbott et quatre écoles secondaires de l'ouest de Montréal. Il s'agissait de permettre à des étudiants suivant un cours de psychologie (350-305) au collégial de mettre en pratique leurs connaissances en servant de tuteurs à des élèves du secondaire présentant des difficultés de lecture.

Menée en 1973-1974, l'enquête a utilisé le MacGinitie Reading Test pour repérer 190 élèves du secondaire ("grade 7") présentant des difficultés de lecture. Des groupes de contrôle et des groupes expérimentaux ont été construits pour vérifier l'efficacité du tutorat joint à un contrat de lecture comme méthode d'enseignement correctif. Dix heures de tutorat et 30 heures de lecture constituaient la somme de travail de chaque élève du secondaire associé à un étudiant du collégial. Le test, subi pour la première fois en octobre 1973, a été utilisé une deuxième fois en mai 1974 pour évaluer les progrès accomplis.

On a enregistré un progrès significatif au niveau de la compétence en lecture chez les élèves du secondaire et l'expérience a permis au cours de psychologie d'atteindre ses objectifs. À partir de 1975, ce projet de recherche a subi des modifications considérables et a pris le titre: ##Programme pour développer la compétence en lecture et le rendement scolaire chez les étudiants "dangereusement faible" du collégial.

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THE PROGRAM TO REMEDIATE READING DISABILITIES IN ADOLESCENTS

John Abbott College
Geraldine J. Schwartz
Project Co-ordinator

E D U Q 8170444

The Program to Remediate Reading Disabilities in Adolescents

Geraldine J. Schwartz
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Reading skills are central to school performance in all academic subjects. It is therefore unfortunate that a significant number of adolescents enter high school with skills one to three grades lower than those required for the grade. In October 1973, 955 grade 7 students in four schools on the West Island were tested with the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, Survey E. One in five or 190 students were within the remedial range. It is evident that even in our affluent environment many children do not have reading skills appropriate for their grade.

This program is designed with two major objectives in mind. On the one hand we attempt to provide John Abbott students studying Adolescent Psychology with an exciting and viable learning experience where the theories about behavior, development and research design discussed in the classroom can be applied and validated first hand. Secondly we attempt to provide a realistic and economical solution to the problem of the disabled reader in the public high school. In addition there are many secondary objectives of which perhaps the most important is to fulfill in part our role as a community college, and to reach out into the community to breakdown some of the barriers between our institutions, as well as, to provide an important service to the schools.

The program is based on the use of three independent variables. John Abbott students studying Developmental Psychology (350-305-69)

act as Reading Buddies to grade 7 students to individualize the learning experience for each disabled reader. The student applies a Language Arts Program which enables the adolescent to retreat to his level of competence and to build his skills in reading from that baseline. As well, a new application of behavioral technology is used to monitor a reading contract based on library books that are within the student's range of understanding. In this contract all reading behavior is consequated and a point system is used to reinforce and motivate the reader to build skills on his own. Thus the program is Learner Centered, and the responsibility for moving his skills from point A to point B lies directly with the learner.

During the 1974 program each subject had at least ten hours of skill building time monitored by the Buddy and at least 30 hours of reading experience working on his contract. In addition each student received an individually designed summer contract based on the present level of his skills. All subjects will be retested in November 1974 to determine the effect of the summer program and the stability of their increase in scores.

Results

The differences in test results for October and May between the experimental and control groups were compared and the results are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

A Priori Comparisons Between Groups

Treatments	Speed & Accuracy	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Overall
E1 with C1	**	**	N.S.	**
E1 with C1 + C2 + C3 + C4	**	**	N.S.	**
E1 with C4	**	**	N.S.	**
E2 with C2	**	N.S.	N.S.	*
E2 with C1 + C2 + C3 + C4	**	*	**	*
E2 with C4	**	**	N.S.	**
E3 with C3	**	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
E3 with C1 + C2 + C3 + C4	**	N.S.	N.S.	*
E3 with C4	**	N.S.	N.S.	**
E4 with C1 + C2 + C3 + C4	*	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
E4 with C4	**	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
E5 with C1 + C2 + C3 + C4	**	*	N.S.	N.S.
E5 with C4	**	*	*	*
E1 + E2 + E3 with E4	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
E1 + E2 + E3 with E5	*	N.S.	N.S.	*
E1 + E2 + E3 with E4 + E5	*	N.S.	*	*
E1 + E2 + E3 with C1 + C2 + C3 + C4	**	**	*	**

Note.-The .15 level of confidence is included because it is the level recommended by the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

**$p \leq .05$

*$p < .15$

It should be noted that in overall or composite scores there are significant differences between E1 and C1 at the .05 level of confidence, and between E2 and C2 at the .15 level. The differences between E3 and C3 are not significant, but when E3 is compared with all the control groups there is a significant difference at the .15 level of confidence, and when E3 is compared with C4 the difference is significant at the .05 level of confidence. The difference between E4 and E5 and the control groups are not significant, except that when E5 is compared with C4 the difference is significant at .15 level. The differences between the full treatment groups E1 + E2 + E3 and the groups that received partial treatment E4 + E5 are significant at the .15 level. Finally it is important to note that when the composite scores of the experimental subjects E1 + E2 + E3 are compared with those of the control subjects C1 + C2 + C3 + C4 the differences are significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Table 2 presents the grade scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, Survey E (grades 7-9).

TABLE 2

Grade Scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test

Group	Speed & Accuracy		Vocabulary		Comprehension		Overall		Grade Increase
	Oct.	May	Oct.	May	Oct.	May	Oct.	May	
J-E1	5.2	7.8	4.9	7.4	6.0	7.4	5.3	7.2	1.9
B-E2	4.2	6.9	4.9	6.8	5.0	3.7	4.7	5.8	1.1
R-E3	5.2	7.6	5.3	6.9	5.2	6.1	5.2	6.8	1.6
J-C-E4	6.6	8.3	5.1	5.9	5.2	5.0	5.6	6.4	.8
R-B-E5	4.8	6.0	5.2	6.2	4.9	5.2	5.0	5.8	.8
J-C1	5.2	5.7	5.8	6.1	3.9	4.4	5.0	5.8	.8
B-C2	4.7	6.1	5.9	7.2	5.4	4.1	5.3	5.7	.4
R-C3	5.7	6.2	5.1	6.2	4.4	5.9	5.0	5.9	.9
D-C4	4.7	4.6	5.0	6.1	3.7	4.1	5.1	4.9	-.2

It should be noted that for the three experimental groups there is a grade score increase of 1.5 grades as compared to 0.6 of a grade increase for the combined control groups. The increases of the experimental groups in Speed and Accuracy 2.6 grades, and in Vocabulary 2.0 grades are the most spectacular. Comprehension, a much more complicated variable, is more difficult to move in all groups.

Table 3 presents the percent of change from October to May for all groups.

TABLE 3

Percent of Change from Oct. to May on Reading Tests

Group	Speed & Accuracy	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Overall
J-E1	50%	51%	6%	35%
B-E2	64%	38%	-26%	23%
R-E3	44%	26%	13%	28%
J-C-E4	26%	16%	-4%	14%
R-B-E5	25%	19%	6%	16%
J-C1	10%	5%	13%	8%
B-C2	30%	22%	-25%	8%
R-C3	9%	21%	34%	18%
D-C4	-2%	22%	11%	4%
E1+E2+E3	52%	38%	11%	28%
E4+E5	26%	18%	.01%	15%
C1+C2+C3 +C4	11%	18%	6%	10%

It should be noted that the percent of overall change of the combined experimental subjects (28%) is almost twice that of the experimental groups with partial treatment (15%) and almost three times that of the control groups combined (10%).

Other Measures

While as psychologists it is important to establish the basis of the program on reasonably sound objective measures, as educators it is equally important to take into consideration other kinds of data which tell us significant things about the changes in behavior of our adolescent subjects. It should be noted therefore, that 98% of the subjects completed their contract and that 17% earned A+, 61% earned A, 20% earned B, and 2% were incomplete.

Thus 78% of our subjects reached the higher goal. In doing that subjects read 2.8 books in the easy category, 3.1 books in the medium category, and 2.3 books in the hard category for an average of 8.1 books per subject in 10 weeks of treatment. One student read 21 books, and the lowest number of books read by a student was three. When we consider that many of these students have completed a book for the first time in their lives we realize that their effort and achievement is considerable.

Table 4 reflects the individual subject's achievement.

TABLE 4

Subjects Scores According to Grade Levels in May

% of S Scores	J-E1	B-E2	R-E3	E1+E2+E3
Less than 6.0	15%	50%	31%	32%
Between 6.0 and 7.0	31%	36%	31%	33%
Between 7.0 and 8.0	8%	7%	31%	15%
Between 8.0 and 9.0	38%	7%	7%	17%
Over 9.0	8%	0%	0%	3%
Higher overall scores in May	100%	79.5%	87.5%	89%
Greater than 6.0	85%	50%	69%	68%

Note.-in Oct. all S scores were less than 6.0

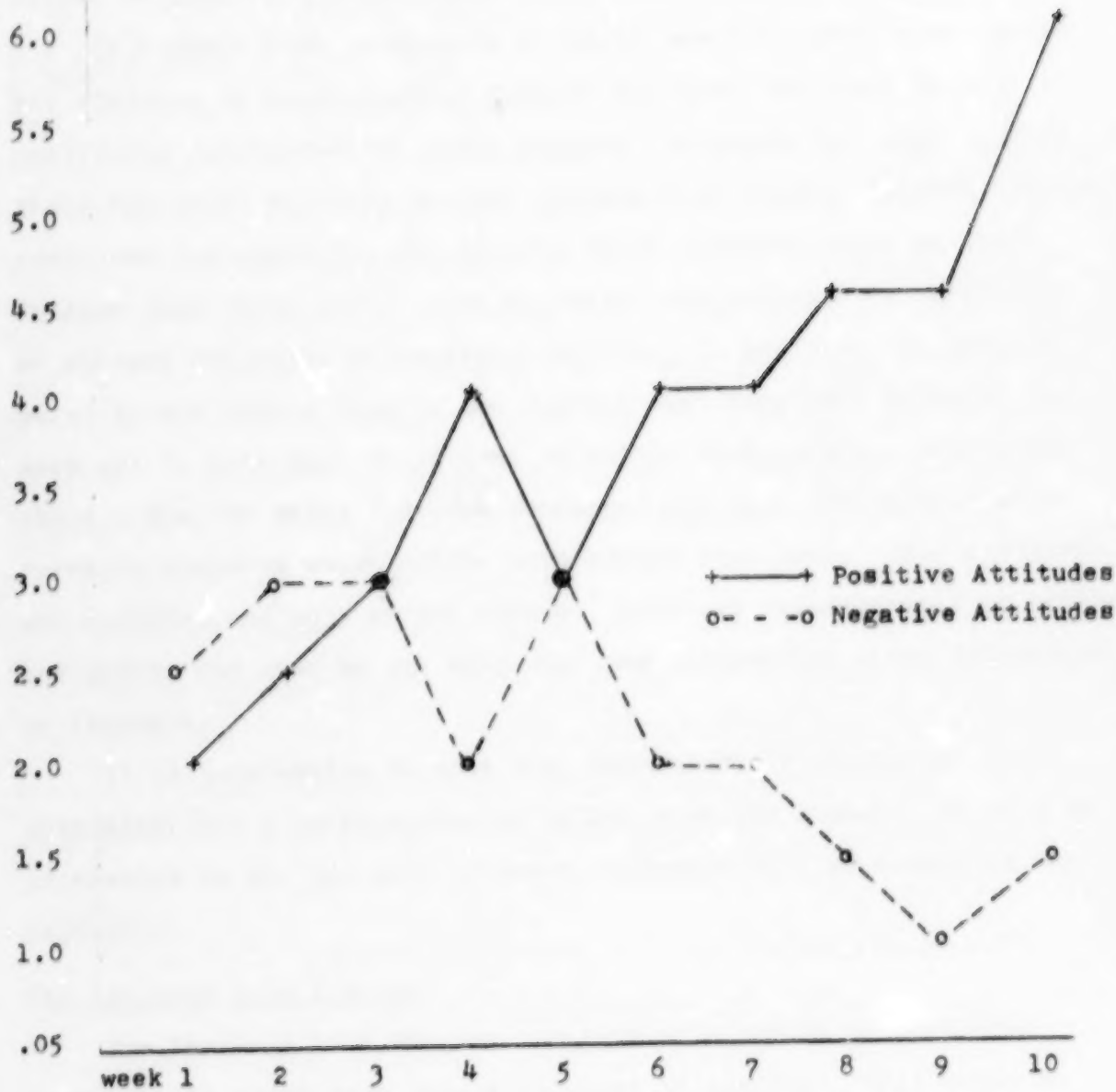
It should be noted that in order to be considered for the program students had to have scores of less than 6.0 in October. In May, 68% of these subjects have scores greater than 6.0 and 89% have shown an improvement in May. Thus we can conclude that for a large percent of subjects the program enables students with reading disabilities to improve their skills.

Operant Technology

This program uses a new application of operant technology. Each J.A.C. student acting as a contingency manager, systematically reinforced all positive attitudes towards reading, the self and the school with points and praise in order to modify the subject's perception about reading and himself as a reader. At the same time all negative attitudes were shaped out by systematically ignoring them. These subjects, because of their long history of failure in academic activities have built up a series of avoidance strategies to reading. Unless these strategies are broken down, at least to some extent, reading will not occur, particularly since for this program reading must be self generated.

Each J.A.C. student recorded all expressed attitudes for each session and prepared a graph to illustrate the number of positive and negative attitudes reinforced or ignored. A composite graph of these attitudes is presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Mean Number of Expressed Attitudes



It can be seen that there is an important reduction of negative attitudes and a corresponding increase of positive attitudes over the 10 week period. This is reflected in almost every case by the J.A.C. student's report that their clients feel better about themselves as readers and that they enjoy reading more.

It appears that retreating to their level of competence enables the students to be successful most of the time, and thus to be positively reinforced for their success. Students are able to see their own skill building as they proceed from simpler to more difficult exercises successfully, and to note their improved speed as their Buddies time their work. Thus students' new concepts of themselves as readers are built on tangible results. In addition the growing point totals enable them to see exactly what they have achieved each week and to note that their goal is within their reach. Points and the A grade for which they are exchanged act as a strong motivating force to students whose grades have always been poor. Thus attitudes are modified not only by the Buddies' positive reinforcement of praise and points but also by the subjects' new information about themselves as learners.

It is interesting to note that most students contracted with enthusiasm for a large number of points over the summer. We will be interested to see how many of these contracts will be completed next September.

The Language Arts Program

The Language Arts Program consists of a series of workbooks based on the eight main skills required in reading. They begin at the grade 4.1 level and continue through grade 7. Each exercise is followed by a series of clearly defined tasks to build skills. Both

the J.A.C. students and the grade 7 students reported that they were "neat" and even fun. The high interest and enjoyment are an important factor in demonstrating that reading and improving one's reading skills are intrinsically pleasurable for their own sake. This is a new concept for most poor readers.

A Learner Centered Program

Unlike most individual tutorial situations this program is strongly and emphatically learner centered. J.A.C. students establish a professional relationship with their subjects and do not encourage dependency of any kind during treatment. Fulfillment of the weekly contract is carried on by the subjects outside the structured session so that the subject will learn to read on his own after treatment is complete. It is hypothesized that if this reading begins to provide intrinsic pleasure the reinforcement will be internalized and the subject will continue to read for the same reason that other people read, because it is enjoyable.

Thus the program is weighted to provide 30 hours of unstructured reading time compared to 10 hours in the skill building session. At the end of the program many subjects expressed new enjoyment in reading and it is hoped that the summer contract will consolidate their behavior as both pleasurable and as an important way to learn.

Problems

The program's main problems are centered around the validity and reliability of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test as an instrument to measure progress in reading, as well as the testing environment, and the student's expressed anxiety about testing. To the extent possible, solutions will be sought in each of these areas for Phase III of the program.

Course Objectives: Development Psychology 11 (350-305-69)

1. To develop a basic understanding of the theories of Cognitive and Affective Development as they apply to adolescence, most particularly those of Piaget, Gagné, Erikson, Kohlberg, etc.

5	4	3	2	1
47%	47%	6%	-	-

2. To demonstrate the use of experimental method and design, as it applies to research in adolescent psychology.

5	4	3	2	1
66%	34%	-	-	-

3. To demonstrate the use of operant technology and social learning theory as they apply to problems outside the laboratory setting.

5	4	3	2	1
56%	33%	11%	-	-

4. To provide meaningful fieldwork where the student can observe the adolescent milieu, as well as participate actively in the life of an adolescent, in order to observe the theories and test their validity in a practical way.

5	4	3	2	1
72%	21%	7%	-	-

5. To allow the student to observe himself in the role of a "helper" in order to facilitate career decisions regarding the helping professions.

5	4	3	2	1
63%	37%	-	-	-

6. To observe the science of psychology in action by participating in a real and meaningful experimental program thus tying up the theory, the practice and research.

5	4	3	2	1
66%	30%	4%	-	-

7. To draw forward the theories of cognitive and affective development past adolescence into adulthood and old age.

5	4	3	2	1
22%	63%	15%	-	-

(Circle 5 if you feel the objective has been reached in your case. Use the other numbers to indicate the degree to which they have been partially reached.)

Objectives: For the Program on the Remediation of Reading Skills in Adolescents

1. To individualize a reading program for each student so that he may begin from his tested baseline to increase his skills in the Language Arts by at least one grade.

5	4	3	2	1
58%	42%	-	-	-

2. To provide structured sessions to accelerate the development of skills.

5	4	3	2	1
54%	42%	3%	-	-

3. To provide unstructured reading experiences at the students level of competence so that he engages in reading behavior in a natural and voluntary way in his home environment and outside the classroom.

5	4	3	2	1
48%	48%	3%	-	-

4. To motivate the student through the use of a reading contract, where all reading behavior is consequated to read and to practice reading skills.

5	4	3	2	1
61%	33%	6%	-	-

5. To break down avoidance strategies to reading and practicing reading skills through the use of operant technology.

5	4	3	2	1
15%	73%	6%	6%	-

6. To modify the student's concept of himself as a poor reader to a potentially good one.

5	4	3	2	1
58%	33%	6%	3%	-

7. To develop sufficient reading skill, and intrinsic pleasure in reading so that reading behavior becomes sufficiently self-reinforcing, to be initiated independently after the treatment has been completed.

5	4	3	2	1
41%	41%	9%	6%	3%

8. To provide assistance and motivation and support to the students through the use of a Reading Buddy, whose position as a college student has status value, so that objectives 1-7 may be achieved.

5	4	3	2	1
71%	26%	3%	-	-

(Circle 5 when you feel the objective has been reached completely. Use the other numbers to indicate the degree to which they have been partially reached.)

Objectives

The objectives included in this report are presented to the students at the beginning of their course. The percentages listed below the scale are a composite of the student's opinions as to the degree to which they have been reached.

Phase Two of the program has reached, or is approaching its major objectives. It has provided considerable improvements over Phase One and some important solutions which will be most helpful when we redesign the program for Phase Three.